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THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

MISSIONS

A Survey of the Effects of the War upon Missions

In 1814 the hopes of the individual missionary societies were allied with plans for co-operative advance. After five years of war, the *International Review of Missions* for October endeavors to show something of that struggle's impact upon missions. It was thought in the beginning that the war might be localized in the Balkans or in Europe, but the societies soon realized that no part of the habitable earth could remain untouched. It swept over the mission fields of Africa, Mesopotamia, and incidentally to India, Asia Minor, Persia, Syria, Palestine, less directly Japan and China and the island fields of the great oceans, and it made serious inroads on the finance and missionary personnel at the home bases. Nevertheless, here as elsewhere there was a remarkable exhibition of loyalty and steadfastness by the lovers of missions.

The American board in Turkey dwindled from 150 to 36. These missionaries led in the distribution of funds supplied by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, and when diplomatic relations were suspended they bore the full burden. Much of the equipment in buildings was taken over by the Turkish government for military purposes. The schools and colleges in Turkey shrank exceedingly in enrolment. In Syria and Palestine the elimination of those not of the Turkish race bereft the mixed population of these warm friends and advisers. Similarly, the British missionary effort suffered in this Near East war area. Schools, hospitals for the insane, orphanages, and other materials of the missionary program were carried on in a very inferior manner or given over for Red Cross or other military purposes. Some of these buildings were destroyed by shell fire.

In Persia the struggle moved backward and forward, hampering the medical and other missionary work. In helping the population fight starvation and disease several of the missionaries died from disease and overstrain. The missionaries were compelled to leave Mesopotamia and Arabia, closing the medical work and leaving the Arabic services to a catechist. The whole equipment of the hospital and school at Bagdad was lost. The work in Africa was much disturbed. War had claims on many in the missionary ranks—especially doctors and nurses. Mission hospitals were filled with the sick and wounded. Large numbers of the native Christians were requisitioned for war services. Forty-two missionaries of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa were taken into captivity by the Germans in the Rovuma district and were war prisoners for twenty-six months. Much of the mission property in the path of the war was looted and destroyed. Other buildings were commandeered by the German government. In several sections the missionaries had to be withdrawn. The great Jewish missions in Eastern Europe had to be closed.

The effects of the war on the German has been more serious than on the allied missionary work, for many of its effects are of a more lasting nature. The allied governments have decided to exclude the German missionaries from their territories for a period, and since the work of German missions was carried on mainly either in British territory or in the former German colonies now under one or the other of the Associated Powers the consequences are far-reaching. These repatriated missionaries are turned back from their livelihood under the political necessities of the time, and in the best years of their lives are separated from the work to which they are most deeply devoted.

"Figures of native Christian communities bring before us in the aggregate hundreds of thousands of men and women deprived of the spiritual guides through whom they had learned of Christ and to whom they looked for enlightenment and consolation." In 1913 the Gossner mission in India had a Christian community of 100,000 with 61 foreign missionaries. The Schleswig-Holstein mission had, in 1913, 14,000 baptized Christians, 60 schools, 30 missionaries, with 12 main stations. There were 259 schools, 11,000 pupils, 33 missionaries, and 24 main stations in the Leipzig mission. These are but part of their work in India. They had considerable missions in Hong-kong, British North Borneo, Egypt, the Gold Coast, British East Africa, South Africa, the former German colonies in Africa, Caroline Islands, Syria, and Palestine. They still have their smaller work in Japan and an extensive mission in the province of Kwangtung, China. The Dutch East Indies is the only important field of German missionary effort not adversely affected by the war. Other missionary groups will act as trustees of the German missionary communities during the period of political reconstruction.

Following is a general summary of the impact of the Great War on missionary enterprises: Instead of a natural increase, twelve British mission societies decreased in staff from 4,899 to 4,630, working in more than one field. For the single fields these societies decreased from 1,668 in 1914 to 1,596 in 1918. The American missionary situation shows some fluctuations, but the totals show an increase in every field except two. Entering the struggle later the effect of the war is not so patent, though there is evidence that the strain was beginning to tell. With the neutrals there is some fluctuation, but on the whole there is more or less advance. It was difficult to increase the personnel on the various fields, due to scarcity of transportation and the difficulty in

getting permits. Traveling in perilous waters, suffering imprisonment and privation, combating virulent disease, all took a large toll in the lives of the missionaries. Six American boards report the loss of twenty-six missionaries through wounds, disaster at sea, or disease. British societies record thirty-six deaths from similar causes. In addition many missionaries were removed for one cause or another from their work. Four hundred American missionaries, according to the survey, acted as chaplains, Y.M.C.A. workers, and as doctors and nurses. Five hundred British missionaries replaced their ordinary duties by war work either on the mission field, home base, or the front. Fifty-four German missionaries served as combatants and numbers of others in other branches of war service. The dislocation of the furlough has depleted the physical strength of hundreds of missionaries. Thus there have been many handicaps in the work of Kingdom extension, but the loyalty and courage of those dark years of turmoil bespeak new devotion for the future in this great enterprise.

Political Reform and Hinduism

In leading India toward the goal of responsible government, there must come a radical change in the traditional ideas of the relations of the rulers and ruled. Professor A. G. Hogg, in the *International Review of Missions* for July, presents the possible contribution of Christianity in the coming political reform. In the passage that he quotes from the Montagu-Chelmsford Report is this pertinent statement: "Unless the political changes now in contemplation are accompanied by an educational campaign directed to awaking in all classes alike. . . a sense of citizenship, disaster will certainly result." The great movement toward responsible government in the West had the aid of Christianity. Nor do we give Christianity all the credit. It worked in conjunction with the politi-

cal ideas of the Greek city-states and that influx of crude free spirit of the north. It presented the germ with a congenial soil. More than that, it demanded that those in authority should claim that authority through willingness to serve. While Christianity gave a theocratic message to the old aristocratic form of government yet today it breathes life into the civic point of view of responsible government. Could that gulf have been bridged by any other religion?

Civic disaster is predicted without a collateral of education, and a knowledge of responsibility depends on the experience of responsibility. This idea of preparation for governmental responsibility while simultaneously exercising its functions was the great lack of the Minto-Morley reforms. The whole adventure is not without grave misgivings. Who knows but that the problem of Indian political reform may turn out to be one with the problem of evangelization? Today there is the danger of laying at the door of racial characteristics the blame that may properly belong to religion. The easy-going tolerance toward other creeds by nominal Christians credits them with an excellent supply of religion, but sees an inferior character development due to race. This racial intolerance is taking the place of the old religious intolerance. But it is quite possible that if there is such inferiority its deepest cause is the religious factor. It may be that the metaphysical idealism of Vedantic thought, the contribution of the Aryan spirit, succumbs to pessimism on account of social and political causes. If there is a new social and political outlet it may enhance the life of that earlier idealism and alter the religious faith of India.

The obstacle to responsible government, caste, has proved its ability to bend in making adjustments. No doubt it could give that respect to the political equality of all citizens demanded by responsible government while retaining the dogma of human

inequality. Britain has made some inconsistent compromises at home. Hinduism as a conservative factor could consolidate gains, but it seems to have little of the motive power for constructive social effort. Thus where the question is not the existence but the inauguration of responsible government, Hinduism appears to be a dead weight to be overcome. To regard caste not simply as a system of social cleavages but as a religious institution, one discovers that inequality is regarded not as an injustice but as a just recompense for the deeds of previous incarnations. It is clearly dangerous to inaugurate a crusade among the masses even when there is a religious sanction for their just claims. How hazardous would be this procedure, such sanction being absent! The doctrine of karma is that men should unrepiningly accept the status in which they were born as a religious duty, for this inequality is the intention of heaven. The masses cannot press for rights when troubled by a religious bad conscience. While we cannot put a large faith in a priori reasoning where Hinduism is concerned, we must see that the controlling and sobering sense of a religious sanction is not present in the movement for responsible government.

This sense of inequality keeps India's kindness of heart from reaching out to the less fortunate members, though the belief that giving to him who believes in the one *ātman* gives to one's self and the idea of storing up merit have contributed to a superficial sort of charitable endeavor. This may have copied Christian mission activities. "The moral of all this is that if our fear of the risks involved in provoking among the unprivileged a demand for rights unsanctioned by their religion leads us to hope that the evolution of responsible government as a working institution may be brought about mainly by systematic effort on the part of the immemorably privileged to uplift their brethren, it is not to Hinduism that we can

look to inspire and control this effort." The problem of the political reconstruction of India is closely bound up with the problem of India's Christianization (Luke 22: 25, 26). Hinduism bases its tenure of authority and privilege on a system of giving rewards for an unremembered past; Christ teaches an authority that rests on service. It is respected because of its reality through service. This is the dynamic. It is not suggested that India must be predominantly Christian before she can practice responsible government successfully. The latter goal is likely to be realized before the former. Then too this new outlet of social and political life can give an opportunity for the fulfilment of the optimistic idealism of her early philosophy. It will take away much of the occasion for world-weariness. Seeing young students revert to the speculative pessimism after a noble Christian enthusiasm in their college life suggests the way of new opportunity as an assurance of a continuing life of service for the welfare of all.

Some Hindu Impressions of Christianity

The questions sent out to three Hindu gentlemen, asking for their estimate of Christianity, stumbling-blocks to its development in India, and along what lines hope of progress lies, brought out some interesting suggestions. These are published in *Young Men of India* for August. One sees as obstacles: (1) The rooted attachment to Hinduism, with which the traditions of the nation are so intimately bound. (2) The foreign garb in which Christianity presents itself: its religious ideas are foreign to the Hindu consciousness. Its chief preachers for more than two centuries and even now are foreigners. The mode of life of a large number of its converts is foreign. In their ideals relating to the development and nature of the Indian Christian community they are

essentially foreign, and in this they are dominated by the outward life of their foreign missionary teachers. The influence of the feeling of Western race and political superiority has kept an *official* character in the relations of missionary to convert. However, there is evidence of improvement. Much Indian, European, and American thought has been focused on this feature in attempting to avoid this crippling *denationalization*. "Personally I think that the contribution of the Indian Christian community, when it is liberated from its leading strings and comes to its own—thus entering upon its true and independent life—to the building of a real and lasting Indian nationality will be of uniquely valuable character." Their ideas of citizenship, obtained from associating with the best type of Western civilization, will supplement the defects in the non-Christian conceptions of an Indian nationality. "The work that has been done in this way by devoted Christian patriots like the late Dr. Macnichel and Mr. C. F. Andrews, promises abundant national fruitage."

The ignorant cannot understand and the educated cannot accept the purely Christian theological ideas of dogmatic Christianity. With the ethical and sociological ideas of Christianity it is quite different: "These have a lasting hold on my mind and heart." The Christian pattern of family life is "the noblest and the best." Another thinks that no one religion can claim a monopoly to salvation, and that the religion into which a person is born is enough. The Western nations, in their historical happenings and modern tendencies, do not inspire in others what they profess for themselves. They need the preaching of Christianity more urgently than India which has its own religion. They have their own superstitions, narrowness, rigidity, and drawbacks. "Christianity will however be respected as one of the great religions of the world."